

# PRESS RELEASE

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## For Immediate Release

May 11, 2007

## Contact Person

Grant C. Johnson  
Assistant U.S. Attorney

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Bryan J. Severson, 34, of Blanchardville, Wisconsin, was arrested by federal agents this morning, following the return of an indictment yesterday by a federal grand jury charging him with multiple violations of federal criminal statutes relating to the failure of the First National Bank of Blanchardville, Blanchardville, Wisconsin. If convicted of all the offenses charged in the indictment, Severson faces a maximum penalty of 670 years in prison.

The indictment alleges that from May 5, 2000 and continuing to May 7, 2003, Severson aided and abetted Mark R. Hardyman, the bank president, in a bank fraud scheme to defraud the First National Bank of Blanchardville, resulting in a loss to the bank of approximately \$8,792,519.62. In addition to being charged with 11 counts of bank fraud, the indictment charges Severson with one count of perjury, six counts of aiding and abetting the misapplication of bank funds, two counts of aiding and abetting the filing of false statements with an insured institution, one count of aiding and abetting the obstruction of an audit, one count of mail fraud, and six counts of money laundering.

The charges against Severson are the result of an investigation conducted by the Madison Resident Agency of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service, the Office of Inspector General for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the Office of Inspector General for U.S. Department of Agriculture. Prosecution of the case is assigned to Assistant U.S. Attorney Grant C. Johnson.

You are advised that a charge is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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